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ABSTRACT

The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment for grades 4 and 6 (optional for grade 8) is conducted each school year with a call for each student's best piece in March. All students in grades 4 and 6 participate, unless assessed as Limited English Proficient. This Teacher's Guide provides instructions for procedures to be followed throughout the school year in order to ensure standardization in grade 4 writing assessments. Procedures begin with required materials and the introduction of portfolios to students, and then move to working with practice prompts and the required prompts. Use of the portfolios and interpreting the results are discussed. Portfolios are scored holistically; and scoring guides are provided for narrative, expository, descriptive, and analytic writing. Each scoring guide contains examples of student writing at proficiency levels 1 through 6. The required prompts (topics for student writing) for 1992-93 are included in an addendum. (Contains 24 references.) (SLD)

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ED 363 640

New Mexico
Portfolio Writing Assessment

Teacher's Guide
Grade 4

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1992-1993 NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

GRADE 4 — REQUIRED PROMPTS

PROMPT 1 NARRATIVE

One morning when you wake up, you find a large shiny key under your pillow. The key will not open any of the locks in your house, until you find a door in the corner of a closet, a door you have never seen before. Write a story about what happens when you use the key to open the door.

PROMPT 2 EXPOSITORY

Think of <u>one</u> person you would like to trade places with for a day. Write an essay for your teacher explaining why you would want to trade places with this person. Be sure to include supporting details.

PROMPT 3 DESCRIPTIVE

Think about a special event you have been to. This could be a fiesta, a holiday celebration, a party, or any other special event. Describe this event so that someone who was not there will know what it was like. You might want to include what you saw, heard, and smelled, and how you felt when you were there.

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New Mexico
Portfolio Writing Assessment

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THE NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment, grades four and six (optional for grade eight), is conducted each school year, with a call for "best piece" in March. The prompt addressing the type of writing to be assessed at each grade level will be announced when a call for papers is issued. All students in grades four and six will participate. Unless otherwise noted in their IEPs, all Special Education students in grades four and six will participate. Students who have been assessed as Limited English Proficient are exempt from submitting a piece for scoring in the spring.

INTRODUCTION

This Teacher's Guide provides instructions regarding procedures to be followed throughout the school year. In order to ensure standardization, each teacher who is charged with the responsibility of conducting the assessment should adhere to the guidelines presented herein. The process and the assessment should be conducted in a classroom setting; students should not take the work home.

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE GUIDE CAREFULLY BEFORE WORKING WITH THE PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT MATERIALS. You should become familiar with the directions provided in this guide. Your comfort with the assessment situation will reduce student anxiety and enable smooth administration. If at any time you need assistance, materials, or information, contact your District Test Coordinator.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Education Reform Act of 1986 moved the State into the assessment of student writing. Until 1991-92, New Mexico schools were utilizing the Direct Writing Assessment in grades four and six. Interest in portfolio assessment and a national trend toward assessments that are also instructional led the Statewide Student Assessment Task Force to consider using portfolios to assess student writing. Thus, several consultants in the State Department of Education researched portfolio assessments and agreed with the task force that assessments could be provided that can be described as the performance of learning. With assistance and consultation from many entities, the Portfolio Writing Assessment was utilized in classrooms for the first time in 1991-92.

In addition, it was decided to offer this assessment as an option to grade eight students for those districts who wish to participate. This allows for more practice and development as well as an additional checkpoint before the New Mexico High School Competency Examination written composition is administered in grade ten.

Research has demonstrated that students who use portfolios develop more competent writing skills than students who do not use portfolios. Each student's portfolio becomes a record of achievements over time. The student uses higher level thinking skills of synthesis and evaluation as decisions are made regarding what pieces to save as the year progresses. Using the portfolio process, learning takes place in a more natural way as the student is encouraged to reflect on his/her work while making responsible choices regarding work to be saved.

MATERIALS LIST FOR PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

Each teacher who has the responsibility for conducting the Portfolio Writing Assessment will be provided with the following materials:

1. **Teacher's Guide**
   This guide contains information on the process and the assessment and annotated range finder papers for the types of discourse required of the grade level being assessed. Also, within the guide are the rubrics for scoring the students' writing both holistically and analytically. A bibliography is also provided for the teacher's use.

2. **A portfolio envelope**, one per student
   This envelope is intended as a special storage space for the student's writing. It is printed with a writing checklist and a description of the four different discourses applied in grades four through eight. This checklist and the descriptions are reproduced for your use on page 8 of this guide.

3. **A final composition booklet** for each student
   The final draft of "best piece" for the prompt identified by the State Department in the spring to be submitted for scoring will be transcribed onto this booklet. The booklets will be sent to your district when a call for papers is issued in March. Each booklet will contain the required prompt which will be one of the prompts your students have been working on throughout the year. There will be a biographical data page and four lined pages for the student's composition. The student's writing for the required prompt should be limited to four pages. If additional pages are used, the cost of scoring will be higher. A request to add more pages or to submit a computer generated response must first go through your district's office and then be forwarded to the State Department. The State Department will review the request and determine whether or not to grant it.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN DISTRIBUTING PORTFOLIOS TO STUDENTS

1. Provide each student with a portfolio.
2. Have each student write his/her name in the designated space.
3. Discuss how artists use portfolios to demonstrate good work.
4. Explain the use of this portfolio.
5. Review the writing process which will be used with this portfolio.
6. Review the writing checklist printed on the student's portfolio and how it can be used most effectively during this process. (A copy of this checklist is printed on page 6 of this guide.)
7. Explain what holistic scoring means. (Review the rubrics provided in this guide, pages 8, 44, and 70.)
8. Explain what analytic scores mean. (Review the rubric provided in this guide, page 100.)
9. Discuss the types of discourse to be addressed at the grade level you are teaching (see page 6--grades four and six: expository, narrative, and descriptive; grade eight: expository, narrative and persuasive).
10. As you work throughout the year, use the practice prompts first, the ones for which range finder papers are provided within this guide. You may want to review the section on page 4 entitled ***Student as Performer/Teacher as Coach***.
11. When you and the students are comfortable with this process, you will want to move on to the required prompts, one of which will be announced in March for transcribing student work onto the final composition booklet.
12. Additional portfolios may be obtained from your test coordinator.

13. Depending upon the time of arrival of a new student, he/she may not have time to complete all required prompts. When the prompt for which a best piece must be transcribed is announced in March, the teacher may feel the new student did not have sufficient time for completion; therefore, that student paper might not be submitted for scoring. The teacher will desire a score for each student if at all possible. The State Department should be contacted for further clarification.

WORKING WITH THE PRACTICE PROMPTS--RANGE FINDER PAPERS PROVIDED

The bulk of this guide contains three practice prompts, one for each of the discourses to be addressed at your grade level. For each practice prompt, holistic rubrics are provided along with papers which have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all of the six holistic score points possible. In addition, the analytic rubric is provided along with papers that have been scored and annotated to demonstrate all three score points for each of the four analytic categories.

1. During writing instruction time introduce practice prompts and have students write toward those topics.
2. Share range finder papers at this time.
3. Share scoring rubrics at this time by giving each student a copy.
4. Review why each paper was given a particular score.
5. Students can use the rubric to understand how to improve their piece of writing.
6. Students may work in groups to share similar concerns.
7. The writing process of revising should be used at this time.
8. Small or large group writing lessons can be incorporated as defined by certain needs derived from class papers and discussion.
9. Use these prompts for practice in understanding the process as much as you feel necessary.
10. Students should feel successful with these prompts before they work with the required prompts.
11. The timeline for this process should be decided by you and your students.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN WORKING WITH THE REQUIRED PROMPTS

1. The required prompts will be provided to you each year. If you have not received the prompts designated for the current school year, call your test coordinator to obtain a copy.
2. These prompts address the different discourses required at your grade level.
3. Your students are required to write at least one paper for each of the required prompts and should be encouraged to write as many papers as necessary to produce a good piece.
4. Drafts of these prompts should be stored in the students' portfolios.
5. In March a call for "best piece" will be issued for only one of these required prompts.
6. The student and teacher should conference about which piece demonstrates the student's best effort in the called for discourse.
7. The student will then transcribe the "best piece" for the requested prompt into the final composition booklet.
8. The final composition booklet will have four lined pages for this purpose and will be provided when the call for "best piece" is announced.
9. The student should limit his/her writing to no more than four pages.
10. Your test coordinator will disseminate directions for transcribing along with the booklets in March.

As the teacher introduces each of the required prompts, it is suggested that lessons about the particular discourse, planning, revising, proofreading and editing be delivered throughout this period of time. The work with the required prompts should be the student's own writing and should be performed in the classroom.

As the student works with the prompts, he/she may use references such as the dictionary or thesaurus. The teacher's role in this process should be one of "coach." Sound instructional practices are the order of the day in this process. The teacher should be a coach and resource for the student throughout this process.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The purpose of writing is to convert a student's thoughts into a coherent written message understandable by others. The writing process is broken down into four manageable steps to help assure a student's success.

STEP I: PRE-WRITING is any experience, activity, or exercise that motivates a student to write.

STEP II: DRAFTING is the process of synthesizing language experiences, notes, thoughts, and ideas that occur during the pre-writing phase and developing an organized piece of writing.

STEP III: REVISING/EDITING includes all phases of correction and change improvement after collaboration with others on content. Rethinking, reorganizing, and revising ideas, as needed, ready the writing for sharing and/or publication.

STEP IV: PUBLISHING is the culmination of the writing process when the final copy is shared with the audience. The decision as to whether the writing will be displayed, reproduced, or given orally or physically to someone, involves both the author and the teacher.

STUDENT AS PERFORMER/TEACHER AS COACH

Within the student as performer/teacher as coach model, student and teacher work as a team toward mastery of a set of tasks leading toward an outcome. This outcome is then demonstrated by the student. The student must be responsible for an agreed-upon task. After completion of that task, the student demonstrates self-regulation, self-discipline and self-initiative in order to complete a written discourse to the satisfaction of both self and teacher.

In his article, ***Student-As-Worker: Toward Engaging and Effective Curricula,*** Grant Wiggins talks about student-as-worker being able to answer the following questions when working on a designated piece of writing:

1. What is my task?
2. What is its purpose?
3. What do I need to do next?
4. What resources are available?
5. What know-how and knowledge are required to do it well?
6. How will my work be judged?
7. How will I know when my work is adequate?
8. How should I allot my time?
9. What is my goal in this work?
10. Where is my performance strongest and weakest?
11. What can I do to improve?

The student and teacher work through these questions as the written piece unfolds; the teacher acting as prodding coach, and the student as worker. The final completion of the designated piece rests with the student's feeling that he/she has completed a piece of discourse to his/her satisfaction.

WHAT IS A RUBRIC?

A rubric is a set of criteria from which one can take direction. The New Mexico Portfolio Writing Assessment rubric is a six point scale using the following discourses: expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive. Each student should progress through this rubric as his/her writing improves. The assessment becomes an instructional and learning tool with the scoring rubrics applied to the student's writing throughout the process.

WHAT IS HOLISTIC SCORING?

A holistic score is an overall picture of how the student is able to convey meaning in his/her writing. Does the writing have a beginning, middle and end? Does the writing flow to the designated prompt? Is the author involved in the writing? With a broad stroke has the author conveyed meaning?

USING THE PORTFOLIO BEYOND THIS SCHOOL YEAR

In the spring of each school year, the holistic and analytic scores will be returned to the school districts. These scores should become a part of the student's permanent record. Labels are issued to adhere to the student's transcript. There will also be a copy of the report that can be shared with the student and parents.

The "best piece" for each of the required prompts should remain in the student's portfolio, along with any other materials that the student and teacher have agreed upon. The portfolio and its contents are to be passed on to the student's teacher in the fall of the next school year. Each school and district should develop a plan to ensure that this is possible. The "off grade" teachers (i.e., grades five, seven, and nine) may work with the contents of the student's portfolio and issue additional writing assignments which may be kept and passed along with the student from year to year. A process for "weeding out" materials can also be established at the district level. By the time a fourth grade student reaches tenth grade, the high school teacher will have a portfolio of work which portrays strengths, weaknesses, successes, progress and a writer's "voice." These portfolios can be used to assist in the preparation for the tenth grade High School Competency Examination written composition.

INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

When score reports are returned to the districts, each student will receive a holistic score from a range of 1 through 6 and analytic scores from a range of 1 through 3. If a student's paper is not scorable, a reason will be given. Possible reasons for not scoring a paper include: blank paper, off topic, illegible, written in a language other than English, and insufficient response. The scores should be compared to the rubrics published in this guide in order to determine a student's strengths and weaknesses and to provide suggestions for improvement.

The individual school reports should help staff make decisions about the school's writing program. District results should inform the curriculum revision process in writing and, perhaps, in language arts.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

The Language Arts Specialist at the State Department of Education has developed a supplemental packet of material which teachers may find helpful as they work with the portfolio writing process. You may request a packet from your district test coordinator. This supplemental packet contains ideas for planning, organizing, drafting, revising, proofreading and publishing. Ideas for encouraging writing across the curriculum are included in this material. You may reproduce this packet of materials for other teachers in your building. There are ideas that may prove helpful to teachers at any grade level. You are not required to use the supplemental material.

DESCRIPTION OF EACH MODE OF DISCOURSE

Expository--This piece of writing demonstrates the student's ability to explain something in detail, such as "how to" do something, or to explain a position taken based on reasons.

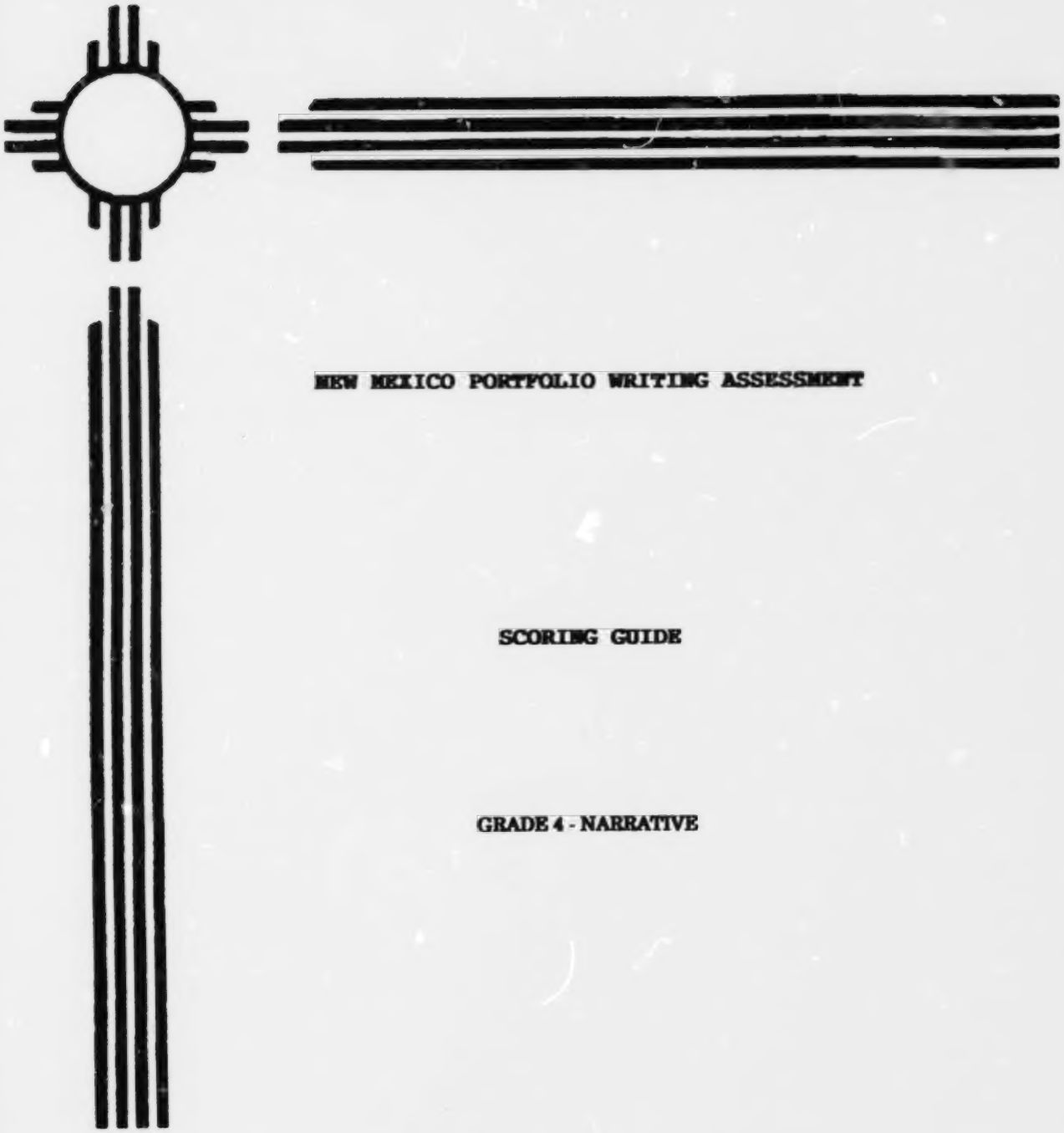
Narrative--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of a story plot and can develop characters in a meaningful way.

Descriptive--This piece of writing demonstrates that the student has a command of location, size, color and style, and can include sensory images in description.

Persuasive--This piece of writing has a strong opening statement, followed by opinionative argument appealing to one's emotions, and a strong conclusion derived from the opening statement.

STUDENT WRITING CHECKLIST

1. I have used a plan for my composition.
2. I have written a rough draft of my composition.
3. I have written this composition to be read by:_____.
4. I have written a good topic sentence for each paragraph that I wrote.
5. I have written ideas and details about the topic sentence.
6. I have written a clear ending for my composition.
7. I have written complete sentences.
8. I have used correct grammar.
9. I have used correct capitalization and punctuation.
10. I have checked my spelling.
11. I have used good handwriting.
12. I have used this checklist to revise my rough draft.
13. I have written and proofread my final draft.



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 4 - NARRATIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - NARRATIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF NARRATION	COMMAND OF NARRATION	UNDERSTANDING OF NARRATION	SOME SENSE OF NARRATION	LITTLE OR NO EVIDENCE OF NARRATION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
∞	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics	May display severe errors in mechanics.
			NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

This is the prompt 4th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Pretend that you see a shiny, purple stone on your way to school. As you pick it up, it begins to change into many different colors. Write a story about what happens next.

1 = The response indicates little or no evidence of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

The Magic Troll

One day I was wakeing to school and I fend troll. and it was a lauaing and it stard to move pleace to please and I wased to deach and I was raning. fatce and in the bus and it move and it got me socred. And it was nathe it ture peach and it too me to this. Is that Magic Troll to the farther. And I was stell in bd and the bov was sull there was I troll. And I went to school. And it was time fom English and

Score Point 1

This response shows little evidence of narration. Many of the statements are too difficult to decipher to be considered controlled (I wased to deach, and the bov was sull).

GRADE 4 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 1**

purle Stone

I went Swmring in the ocean and then then I thougst I saw a purle ago. Then it trans formed in the aliens and fllowed thew alone thim and finally we killed sandam Homsane a then arier a long time we destoryed them. I killed them because thay come out of the purle Stone andthen I threw it back in to the ocean.

Score Point 1

This response is a brief list of events. Although some statements are clear (I went swimming, it transformed, I threw it back), others are difficult to interpret (I saw a purle ago). There is little evidence that the writer attempted to control the details.

GRADE 4 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 1**

The stone i found waking to school. I was waking to School and i found a purple stone but wen i Picket it up! it staxed! Changed Colors Blue, Pink, yellow, Reach, Brown. It was so beatiful and i got to school late wek, all last year I ~~got to~~ School a ell ~~thats~~ all well bye.

Score Point 1

This unsuccessful attempt at narrative writing has some events that are sequenced, but the sequence is very brief. In addition, the only clear, specific details provided are in the list of colors (blue, pink, yellow, peach, brown).

2 = The response indicates some sense of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.
- may display numerous errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

GRADE 4 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 2**

The Shiny purple Stone

On my way to School. I found a purple Stone. I picked It up and on the way It started changing colors the first color was blue, green, red, yellow, pink. It kept on changing different colors and whele I was walking It fell and broke. It was so cool I picked every bit of It.

Score Point 2

This very brief response contains a clear sequence of events showing some evidence of narration. The writer has used transitions (on the way, while I was walking) which is an attempt at organization.

GRADE 4 **NARRATIVE WRITING** **SCORE POINT 2**

The Magic Stone

One day I found a stone. I started changing colors so I picked it up. When I picked it up I put it on a water fountain the stone turned everything gold.

Since I turned everything gold I became the king! Now that I was king I let everybody out of school.

Now that I was the King I gave everybody each 1,000 pounds of gold.

Score Point 2

The writer of this organized and controlled response has used rudimentary transitions (so, when, since, now) to establish a clear narrative sequence. A lengthier sequence or some elaboration of the details is needed for a higher score.

The Puprle Futuer Rock

Wher I was waking to school I saw a shiny puprle rock I pickit it up it strted to chang colers it put me in a bubbly the sine rock made the bubbly chang colers and all my frands found a shine rock to and they where in a bubbly to. All the bubbly popet and we went in to the futuer all my frends where in the futuer all of my frends shiny rock where diffent colers. A hole dunch of peple came after us and we hilld them. And more poeple came after us but they con't cach us they got tierd and we hilld them. And more poeple came but thers helped us. To go bake home and the presedent gave us a reword for saving him.

Score Point 2

This writer has established a situation (we went into the future) and provided some sequenced events to indicate a sense of narration. However, the details become repetitious in the second half of the story (people came after us, more people came, more people came). In addition, the numerous errors in mechanics interfere with comprehension.

3 = The response indicates an understanding of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.

- may display a pattern of errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.

- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

THE SHINY PURPLE STONE

I was walking to school. Then I saw a big purple circle. It was coming after me I ran as fast as I could. I went home, the rock was trying to get thew the door of my walls of my house, then it was in front of my face. It was talking to me, it said pick me up. So I picked it up it wasn't heavy. I thought it was but it wasn't. When I was holding it, then it turned differnt colors. It was winter now it was summer. We played in my backyard. When my mom and dad got home. They really got mad at me. I showed them the rock. Then my house turned into a three story house. Then a space shutle came to the house and the rock went in it. Then it took off. I said good bye then he said I'll be back. I saw my new house it was so big and new furniture.

Score Point 3

This response is a sequence of events with very little elaboration. Also, most of the details are general (it wasn't heavy, it turned different colors, it was so big). Although the writer has used basic transitions (then, so, when, then), the storyline rambles with little sense of preplanning. More specificity and a tighter focus are needed for a higher score.

I was walking to schol when I saw a shiny purple stone I picked it up and it burned me I dropped it and it changed colors. Then it changed into an animal I had never seen before. Then it changed me into a stone. Later on kid come and threw me into The ocean. later a fish swallowed me. Somebody fishing caught him. They cut him and cleaned him. I was sucked down The drain. Then I was swallowed by a crockidile. later a plumber come to fix some pipes. He saw The crockidile and killed it. Then The stone That changed into an animal came to get me. He scared The plumber away. He got me and changed me back Into a kid. Then it changed into a stone and pulled me in. There were four doors. I went in one and There were four doors again. It was a maze. finally I was at the end. There, right before my very own eyes stood a mean beast about two stories high. I was scared but I just ran Threw his giant legs and ont a Tiny door. But I was lost. I saw a blue stone. I picked it up and it took me home. I ran up stairs. There were Two old people. They looked like my grandparents. They didnt no who I was. I ran out off The house and on The street. The cops saw me and took me to There office. Then I ran away. I wandered off so far That in Two days I was in The Rocky Mountains. I started To make a path back To the city.

I walked into a cave and saw an orange stone. But it was in water. When ever I put my hand in the water parts of my body would vanish. so I found some vines and sticks and made a net. I scooped up the stone and Touched it and it took me home. But parts of my body were still vanished. Two days later I found a cure and went home.

Score Point 3

The first third of this lengthy narrative is a well-controlled sequence of events with a logical progression of ideas. However, after the stone changes the main character back into a kid, the response is characterized by excessive rambling. The focus shifts quickly from the maze, to home, and then to the Rocky Mountains and home again. A single focus and more control of the events are necessary for a higher score.

The Shiny Purple Stone

One morning I was walking to schod and I looked on the street and I saw a big huge shiny purple stone and it weighed a 100 Lbs and when I picked it up it started changing colors from purple to black then wite then yellow then red then it pulled me so hard I whanted to let go but I whanted to keep it and it was pulling me fast like a speeding bellet and my feet were 4 inches off the ground and I was 7 min's late for school then it whent so fast it was going like a launching missile then I was hight in the sky whith it and it took me to space and landed on mars I thought it come from a 70 foot stone then it shocked me and I let go an I landed in my sent in school then I was 10 min's late. And I was okay. And when I got out of school I saw it flying in the sky. An it fell down an shrunk an it landed in my hand and I kept it.

Score Point 3

This response has several clear, specific details (weighed 100 pounds, like a speeding bullet, seven minutes late for school). However, some of the details are unclear (I thought it came from a seventy foot stone), and there is a lack of transitions between ideas.

4 = The response indicates a command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

One day I was walking to school with my friends April and Angelica. On the way I saw a shiny purple stone. So I picked it up. It started changing colors. A little man came out. My leader wants me to take you to her. Then he changed me into a puppy. April and Angelica got scared and ran. I said, "stop! stop!" They couldn't understand me. I ran after them I grabbed April by the leg Angelica turned back to help April. Then the little man turned both of them into kittens. They could finally understand me. The little man took us to a strange place. He took us to his leader. I remembered I still had the stone. I had the stone in my mouth and I threw it. Everthing dissapeared we changed back to normal. We were back at school, and it was time to go home. The stone was still on the ground. I threw it away. Angelica and April went home. I never saw the purple stone again.

Score Point 4

This response is a tightly organized sequence of events. Although some of the details are clear and specific (I grabbed April by the leg, I had the stone in my mouth), others are general (they couldn't understand me, took us to a strange place). More elaboration and more specificity are needed for a higher score.

The Purple Stone

One day as I was walking to school, I saw a beautiful glassy, purple stone. When I picked it up it changed into different mellow colors. I needed to find out where it came from, but I could not find someone who new.

After school I showed it to my mom, dad, and my baby brother. They all liked it but we had to take it to a jewelry store. They told us the stone was real, but they did not know where it came from. So we kept it. I got to keep it in my room since I found it.

The next day the stone had gotten bigger, and hot. I went to show it to my mom, and dad. They said that the stone is very special so I didn't worry about it growing anymore.

I went down the street to play with my friend, when a man came up to me asking if I had seen a purple stone. I said, "yes, I have it." The man asked me if

he could have it because it was his. God gave it to him, and he gave me a five dollar bill!

I showed the five dollar bill to my mom, and dad. The were very happy for me.

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of narrative writing. Smooth transitions between ideas add fluency to the well-organized storyline. Although the events are evenly elaborated, the details are too general to merit a higher score (mellow colors, the stone had gotten bigger, very special).

One day I was walking to school and I looked ahead and saw a shiny purple stone. I ran toward it. As I picked it up it started changing sizes shapes and colors. It was wierd but it was also very pretty. So I took it to school and when I was in class I was messing around with it and all of the sudden Poof! I was at a race track there were lots of horses I'm sure number 7 black lightning was going to win so I bet on him I bet over seven million dollars. I kind of knew that the stone would bring me good luck. I rubbed it really really hard. Finally I went to see the race. the track announcer said, "and they are off!" Black lightning was last at first but I rubbed the stone very very hard and black lightning flew in front of all the horses and won the race. I went to collect my money. I got my money and put my lucky stone in my pocket and went back home. My mom was shocked to see all the money I won. I showed my mom the stone she really liked the color. I showed her that it would change colors of purple she liked the colors. I told her if you rube the stone it would bring you good luck

• She rubbed the stone she said she felt wierd already. She would be happy all day. It is wierd I fund a stone take it to school and get good luck. I showed my friends that how many powers it could give out soon I was famous. Everybody thought it was a king. It was neat everybody would obey me Every day it get bigger than smaller. I would always worry about the stone when I am at school everyone at school would ask if it was okay I would say yes. It was really neat it was the same all of my days and so were its powers.

The End

Score Point 4

This lengthy response has specific, elaborated details in the section about the horse race (I bet over seven million dollars, Black lightning flew in front). However, the section about the mother is very general (she liked the color, she said she felt weird). The last section of the narrative seems "tacked on," creating a lack of unity.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

The Shiny Purple Stone

One day I was on my way to school. I was walking with my head down all of a sudden I saw this purple stone. I picked it up and it started to change blindingly bright colors like pink, orange, and yellow. The colors were so bright I had to close my eyes.

When I opened my eyes it had stopped changing bright brilliant colors because it started to rain and the rock was getting drenched. I put the rock in my pocket and I went to school.

When I was at school the stone started to change colors because it was dry. The teacher said, "What is that lemony color?" Everybody pointed at me. The teacher asked me to show her what I had in my pocket I told her, "That I had a rock and that it is a special rock." The teacher said, "I had to go to the principals office for disturbing the class. She said, "I will keep the rock for the year."

Later that day I had to go to the principals office. The principal said, "That I

have detention for a week everyday after school for an hour.

The next day I had a interesting plan. I was going to ask the principal for a hall pass to go use the bathroom. I was going to go and get the rock because my mom said "That it would be worth alot in the future. That day I had asked the principal for the bathroom pass. I was walking down to my classroom and opened the door and looked in her desk and there was the stone. I ran out of the school.

When I got home there was a limo in front of our house. I went in there were some rich people there. They were asking me if I wanted to trade in my rock for a million dollars and I did. After that I was a ten year old millionaire. That day I ate fresh ice cream, and moist chocolate cake with my million dollars.

Score Point 5

This response exhibits a generally strong command of narration. The writer elaborates the storyline with appropriate and varied details (blindingly bright colors, lemony color, moist chocolate cake). In addition, there are smooth transitions (When I was at school, Later that day) and a logical progression of ideas. More development in the section about the bathroom pass would contribute to a higher score.

The strange purple stone

One day when I was walking home from school I found a strange purple stone. I picked it up, and right that very second the rock started to change colors. The rock was wonderfully, fabulosly, fantastic.

Then eight little green men, about one foot tall grabbed me. They threw me in a spaceship, with an old shaggy dog. The spaceship had a bad vile, rancid smell. The men gave me old crusty, pickeld pigs feet for lunch, for desert they moldy, vinegary hairy eyeballs, and crisp grasshoppers.

When we got to the planet Zorra the shaggy dog, and I walked off the ship. We saw a huge spaceship. The little men told me "Please go forward into our king's house." So the shaggy dog, and I walked on to the ship. It had a humid, and musky smell. The king was a big, fat sweaty blob of slime. his name was king Blobbo. He said "You little girl why did you pick up the rock?" I told him because "it was

pretty!" Then I told the dog to bite him. Then the dog went and bit him, and He blew up!

All the little people ran up to me, and hugged me, and said "Thank you for you and that dog killed that ratton king of ours." They took me back to Earth, and to this day I never picked up another rock again.

—— • ——

Score Point 5

This response has a single focus and is organized. The writer's precise word choice provides vivid imagery (vile, rancid smell; moldy, vinegary hairy eyeballs; fat sweaty blob of slime). The use of dialogue to advance the storyline is a successful compositional risk. Although there is a sense of completeness and unity, more development is needed for a higher score.

The Wish Stone

One day I was walking back from school. And at the edge of the corner, was a purple stone. So I went up to it and looked at it weird. It looked like a big shiny flower. I looked at it again and again. Then took one step, and all of a sudden it started to flash all different colors! So I wanted to make it stop, so I touched it and

BOOOOM! It shot up into the sky! And then it came right back down. I thought that it was very neat. So I picked it up and tied a piece of string to it. Then I put it around my neck. I ran home to spread the news. I told my mom but she didn't belive me. So I went into my room. I felt sad. But what if it was only my amagination? Then I said, "oh I wish my mom would belive me!" My words echoed in my room. Again and again soom my words went into my stone. And right away came my mother. She said, "I belive you!" "I really, really do!"

"Wow=!" I shouted. I couldn't belive it. It makes wishes come true! Soom it was night and I went to sleep. In the Morning I woke up. And woe my stone was gone! I searched everywhere. Soom I looked under the pillow. There was a letter it said.

"Dear person,"
"I am sorry I couldn't give you another wish."
"I had to go back to my planet"
"They need me!"

Your friend,
Stone Star.

I said thats alright but next time I want it to be.....

Money!

Score Point 5

This response progresses logically throughout and is tightly focused on discovering the power of the stone. The sophisticated use of language (spread the news, my words echoed) and the humorous and effective closing are successful compositional risks. Repetition of simple transitions (then, so) and lack of development prevent the response from receiving a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of narration.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

My Best Friend was a Rock

I was 13 on November 9, 1994 it was a fabulous day for me. A great thing happened. I saw a shiny purple stone. I thought it looked neat so I picked it up. I squeezed it to see how it would feel. It started flashing out the weirdest colors like lavender, raggle-daggle-rose, turquoise, navy blue, outrageous orange and tons of other wonderful colors. Right after that I dropped it quickly.

The rock moaned and complained that it would get a headache from my dropping it. I was extreemly suprised that he could talk! It grabbed a paper and pen from my bag, and drew a Tylenol pill on the paper. The pill popped right out of the pad. He took some Tylenol hoping it would help his headache.

I talked to the rock for a while. Then I asked him to come to school with me in my shoe. He agreed to come with me and hopped in my shoe.

When I got to school I went to my first class. Everyone was cleaning the room for open house the next day. I got assigned to clean the bookshelf. But then I thought wait a minute and took out my rock. He looked at the bookshelf took out his pen and pad and wrote out the words "Clean Bookshelf". All of a sudden the bookshelf was clean! After that I got to mess around and help a little with the cleaning.

When the school bell rang I walked back home I took out my rock and asked him to draw a swimming pool, a movie screen, and a pool table. He did and we had tons of fun with the things he drew. I named my new friend Rocky cause he is a rock. Every day we would play on the things he would draw, and when my mom or dad would get home he would just erase everything. Rocky and I went to bed pretty late in my new water bed he drew for me! When we woke up we went to school in my car which ofcourse Rocky drew me. After school we would always go the store cause Rocky would just draw me money. My family and I were living in a huge house with all the things a teenager would want. For my birthday Rocky would always give me the biggest present.

Then one day Rocky told me he had to go back home. His mom and dad had just left him here for a vacation. I was very sad to see him go. But a few good things are that he left me with a billion and a mansion. He said he would come back and visit me some day. So every night I go to the top of my mansion and look for his ship in the sky. Now that I'm 73 I tell all my friends that my best friend was a rock.

Score Point 6

This response has a fairly sophisticated opening; it does not simply reiterate the situation given in the prompt. It is tightly focused on the drawing theme and is fully elaborated with varied and specific details (razzle-dazzle-rose, drew a Tylenol jar, he would just erase everything). The effective closing provides unity and completeness.

One storming day Justin and I were going to school, I got struck by lightning and I fall to the ground. Justin helped me up, and as I was getting up I saw a beautiful purple stone. It glowed so bright and changed colors and made us happy. When I got to schoo/ I had the stones in my pocket and a very pretty girl came up to me and said she liked me a lot and soon we became in love. In 10 years we were married and were very happy the stone brought us happiness and fortune then one day I met my Friend Justin and he had the stone. He had met a girl and had fallen in love. They soon were married and became very wise. The stone brought both of us good luck in everything but soon the glow was starting to fade. The stone could only be used in certain ways and if misused it could bring geat danger. Justin was becoming greedy and would not share the stone with me I told him "Justin please share the stone with me. or you could be in great danger" but Justin just laugh at me and ran a way with the purple stone. M years later I was working in the yard my little boy was asking me to tell him a story about when I was a little boy. I told him about a great frind ship with a boy named Justin and the good times we had together. When I remembered all the good times a tear came into my eyes and I wondered what happen to Justin. Three years later as I was working in a park that was near my house where I lived, I saw a man walking toward me. He was a very old man and as he came closer my heart stop a beat. I couldn't believe my eyes this old man was Justin. With many years ectched on his wrinkled face and his eyes had a sedness in them. I called his name and as he came closer to me he said please forgive me Jacob, I was greedy and I wanted the purple stone for myself.

I have lost everything my wife and all that I owned. Jacob huged Justin and he said to him "Justin you might have lost everything but one thing for sure you did not lose my Frindship I have wonder what happened to you and with the stone Justin took out the stone from his pocket and it was a ugly gray color. Jacob and Justin took the stone and threw it in the lake in the park. It sunk to the bothom. You don't need a stone to bring you happiness and fortune because those things can be lost before you know it. Frindship will last forever.

Score Point 6

This well-developed, complete story is organized and progresses logically from beginning to end. The writer uses sophisticated techniques such as foreshadowing (if misused it could bring great danger) and vivid imagery (many years etched on his wrinkled face). The moral at the end of the story provides a particularly effective closing which unifies the narrative.

HOWDY!

One day on the way to school I saw a purple stone. I picked it up and it started changing many different colors then I heard a rustling in the bushes. I went over to the bushes and all of a sudden I was completely immobilized but I was still conscious. The stone rolled out of my hand. Then it started to change colors faster. Then it started circling the clear spot in the bushes at the speed of light. Then a door appeared in the middle of the clearing and the stone dropped into my hand and formed a key. Then I felt something I could move! I got up and I put the key in the lock and the door swung open with a crash! I went through the doorway. I took the key out and the door slammed shut. I found myself in a room with lots of controls and buttons. I looked in my hand and the key was now a joystick with a diamond shaped bottom. I studied the room. I found a closet like room with silver colored jumpsuits for people about five feet tall. I tried one on and it was elastic to fit almost anybody tightly. It was actualy very comfortable so I kept it on. I looked around the closet some more and I found some compartments in the floor and a small camera was in the floor next to the compartments it seemed to be examining the symbol on my jumpsuit then the compartment opened and revealed belts, holsters, and laser guns. I put one on. Then I looked around the room some more and I found some books. I couldn't read the language but I could understand the pictures they were instruction manuals! They told me how to

work the machine! It was a time and space machine! I engaged the machine. I went to the past on mars! When I arrived I looked out the video screen I couldn't believe my eyes. There were buildings and houses and even people! I thought since the people were breathing so could I. I went outside and I couldn't breathe I jumped back inside I was amazed I jumped higher than my house would be! I thought that was so because the gravity on Earth is greater than on Mars. When I landed in the spaceship I closed the door quickly. Just then I noticed an aluminum band under my chin that looked like an air mask so I put it over my mouth and nose I went back outside. I could breathe!

I walked around town for a while I just found the usual clothing shops, weapon shops, and things like that. One strange thing, though, I noticed everyone was armed! I thought I should get back to the spaceship just incase besides I could come back anytime I want. When I was walking back I noticed that everyone was looking at the symbol on my jumpsuit very awkwardly.

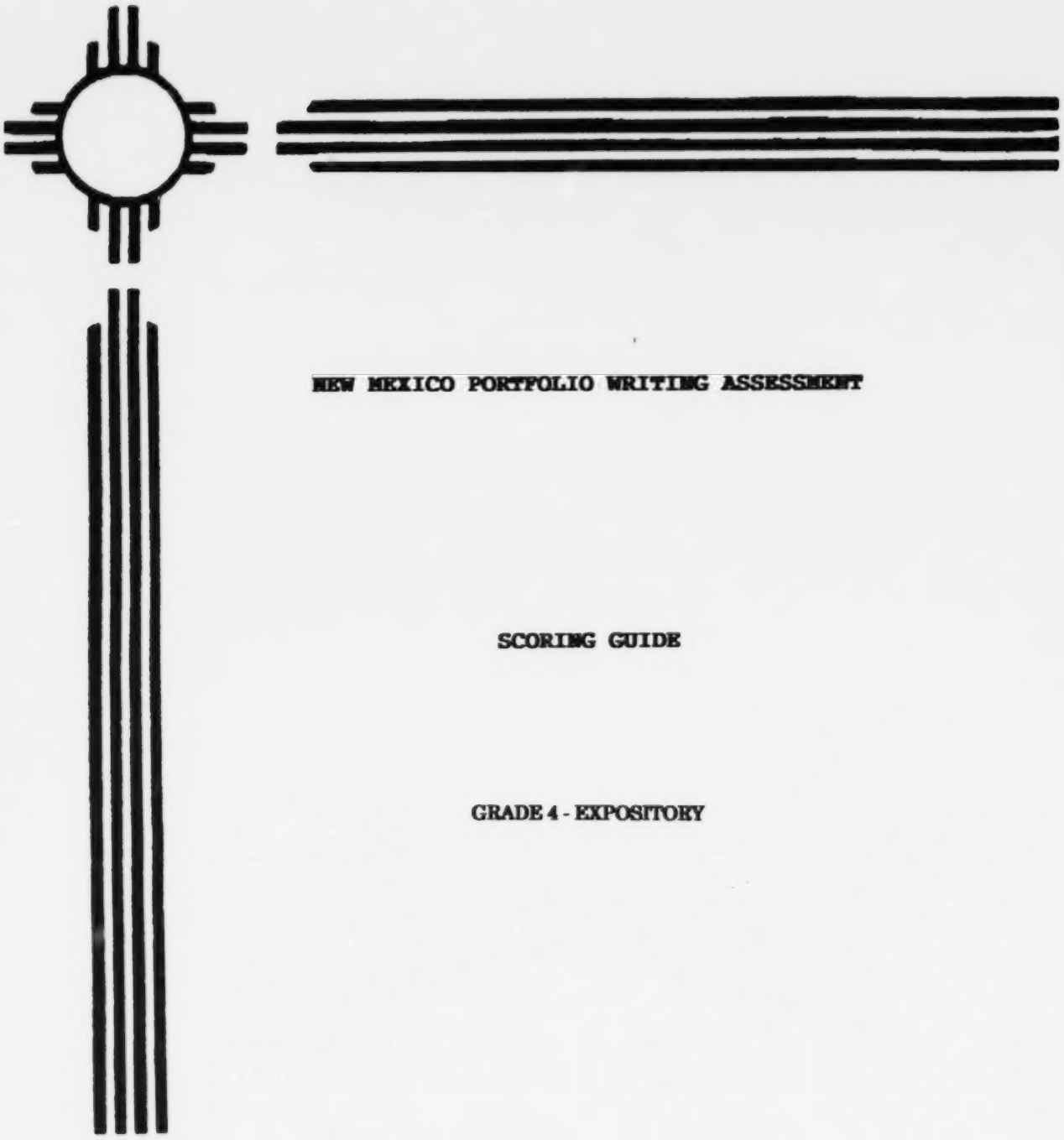
When I got back to the ship I went inside and I was greeted by strange creatures. There were three. One of them said, "Howdy" one said, "Well partner we reckon your found the the key to this here spaceship" I said, "you don't have to talk like that just talk like I do." One of them said, "alright but we thought that's the way you talked. We learned to speak english from old radio programs.

"Now that that's cleared up what were you saying about a key?" "That stone in your hand that is the key to our spaceship I said. "If this is yours than you should have it but at least take me home." One of them said, "alright but you have to promise not to tell anyone about us." I promised then we flew home. They let me keep all the things I found on the ship they also gave me a comeunicator. We went many more places and had many adventures but thats another story.

Score Point 6

This lengthy narrative is a well-controlled sequence of detailed, specific events. The writer's well-chosen vocabulary (I was completely immobilized but I was still conscious) and humor (We learned to speak English from old radio programs) help to create a well-developed and complete story.

NOTES



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 4 - EXPOSITORY

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - EXPOSITORY SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	LIMITED COMMAND OF EXPOSITION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF EXPOSITION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics	May display severe errors in mechanics.
			NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

This is the prompt 4th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Your newspaper is asking people to write to them and explain what animal makes the best pet. Write a letter to the paper telling what animal you think would make a good pet and explain why.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.
- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.
- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.
- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

Dear Editor

I think that a Alaskan Malamute would be a great pet to have. I would love to have one my self. I like them because they would be fun to play with and you can have fun racing on a slade and they are good race dogs. It would be alot of work like, practicing for a race, feeding, runing with them every morning too. And last of all trying to enter a race. Well thank you for reading what I thought would be a good dog.

Score Point 1

This response gives a topic (Malamutes) and provides a few general details (fun to play with). The focus then shifts to the work involved in racing the dogs. More specific details and more control are needed for a higher score.

Dear Sir!

I think the best kind of pet in the world is a Newrebeun Goat. I have one, and her name is Maly Kate. The first reason is because, my mom and dad love her as much a I do. They should, they bought her.

My second reason is that she is just a kid. She is easy to take care of, but she eats a ton. Sometimes she cries because she misses her real mother, but not that often.

My third reason is that they can be your friend. You may think that a Newrebeun Goat is mean or weird, but their kind and neat to have around. All of these reasons don't even cover half of the reason to have a Newrebeun Goat. I think anybody would enjoy one.

Score Point 1

This response exhibits an inadequate command of expository writing. The writer gives a clear subject and a few general details (mom and dad love her, can be your friend) but also includes several inappropriate details about negative traits which do not support the choice of the goat as the best pet (eats a ton, cries, mean).

2 = The response indicates a limited command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.

- may display numerous errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

January 1, 2000

Dear Editor,

I think the best pet is a Macaw. A Macaw is a beautifly colored parrot. It has the colors of: Dark Blue, Tangy Red, Bright Yellow and Very Dark Green. They live in South America, Central America, and Mexico. In my opinion they are the most beautiful, but, as a fact they are the largest parrots. Did you know they can grow from 12 to 39 inches long. They have heavy, powerful bills. They use these bills to eat nuts, seeds, & fruit. They often can be seen flying Tropical Rain Forests. They can also scream and bite, so you better watch out.

You can teach them to talk, but it isn't easy! If you could teach them to talk, I think they would be better pets. If you train them good, when you ask them to they will get on your shoulder and stay there.

That's why I think they're the best pets.

Score Point 2

This response presents some details which support the choice of the Macaw as the best pet (beautifully colored, will get on your shoulder); however, much of the information is descriptive (12 to 39 inches long, eat nuts, seeds and fruit) and does not contribute to the expository task.

Dear News Journal,

I think a dog is the best pet to have because thay keep you company. Thay also get vary frindly some times and playful. When thay get playful thay run after you. Every once and a while thay get cute. Now it's time to talk about my dog named peaches she play's soccer with me some times. She also cheers me up too.

Score Point 2

This brief response has several reasons for the writer's choice of dogs as the best pet. One reason is extended and specific (They also get friendly sometimes and playful. When they get playful they run after you), but the others are general (they keep you company, they get cute). More elaboration of the ideas would be necessary for a higher score.

Dear News Journal

Hi my name is Ali. I'm answering your add in the new's paper abote the best pet. I think the best pet to have is a dalmation dog. Because they get about middel sized. They don't eat a whole lot. They are playful and locol. They are obdent. They learn tricks fastley. They are good with children. They no How to ack around new people. They are very good at geting the paper. They are cute and cudle. And they don't really shed, sometimes but not all the time.

Score Point 2

This response presents a list of details, some general (they are cute and cuddly) and some specific (they don't shed, good guard dogs), to support the choice of a Dalmatian as the best pet. While the discourse is sustained sufficiently to show a limited command of expository writing, more specificity and some elaboration are necessary for a higher score.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

The Worlds Best Pet

Dear Newspaper,

My name is Allison. I think the best pet would be a house cat. House cats would beg the best because they stay inside and have a litter box.

I have a house cat and she never howls at the moon, drinks out of the toilet, or meows uncontrollably.

Cats like to cuddle up with you. And don't shed as much as dogs do. Cats also help man. For example cats are good with children. I wouldn't like cats if they weren't good with children and people.

Thank you for letting me say my opinion.

Score Point 3

This response has a single focus and is organized and controlled but sparse, providing listy details (never howls at the moon, drinks out of toilet, or meows uncontrollably). More elaboration or a more sustained progression of ideas is necessary for a higher score.

DEAR Editor

I think crossbreading a Shire with a Thoroughbred would make the best pet because together your crossbeaded horse would be fast and strong. I would like one of these because you can go Riding through a field at breakneck speed. OR pull a heavy load somewhere. OR for just the pleasure of looking at my beatiful horse! The Shire is a very strong horse. Used partially in the time of King Henry VIII to carry Knights in heavy armor. The Thoroughbred is a fast horse used mainly in racing. Their strong lungs and powerful legs make them great for this. Put together it could run a race, pull a plow, or give you a nice walk in the country. Together they make one great horse!

Score Point 3

This response has some specific and elaborated details (riding through a field at breakneck speed, to carry knights in heavy armor). However, there are interruptions in the logical progression of ideas because details about the crossbred horse are interspersed with details about the shire and the thoroughbred. A stronger organizational strategy would have contributed to a higher score.

Dear Editor

I think Parrots are the best pets. I like them because they can talk. If your in a grumpy mood a parrot will make you laugh. They have the most beautifull feathers you have ever seen. I like the Toucan parrot. One is on a carton for froot loops, Toucan Sam.

I had a parrot named Twetty. If you put on music a parrot will sing and dance. Parrots are not like any other pets. They are my favorite pets because you can let them fly around the house. They will shed feathers. When they do this you can decorate things with the feathers. If you had a bad day you can talk to a parrot and the will listen. They make wonderful gifts.

Have you ever tried to catch a bird so it will sit on your finger. If you have a bird you can trane them to sit on your finger.

If you talk to a dog they just sit there with a sad look on their face. A bird will wistle back and make you fill better.

If you have a bird then you can have a lot of fun with the bird. If you are bored you can put on some music and the bird will go crazy. It is fun to

wacth them do this

If you do not have a parrot I hope I have told you enogh information so that you will get one. I like parrots because of all these reasons. Why do you like them?

Score Point 3

This response presents some elaborated details to support the choice of a parrot as the best pet, but it lacks transitions and is poorly organized. The parrot's response to music is discussed in both the second and fifth paragraphs. More control of the writing and a better organizational strategy are necessary to demonstrate more than a partial command of expository writing.

4 = The response indicates a command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

The perfect pet is a bat. Not a vampire bat, because no one wants their blood sucked. But a regular bat would be good for many reasons.

For one thing, they sleep during the day so it would be great because I'm in school all day. The bat wouldn't get lonely during the day and we would both be ready to play when school is over.

Bats have soft fur. They are quiet. They sleep on the ceiling so they are not in the way. They don't have to go to the vet. They eat insects which is good because my mom hates flies, mosquitoes, and fleas.

Bats are great for the whole family

Score Point 4

This response has a single focus (bats) and consists of loosely connected clusters of ideas. The development is uneven because some ideas are elaborated (sleep during the day, eat insects) while other details are unelaborated (soft fur, quiet, don't have to go to the vet). More even elaboration and smoother transitions between ideas are needed for a higher score.

My pet is a birman cat. This pet would be a very good pet to have. I think a cat is a very good pet to have because they are small. They are also very cute, with orange or grey fur and big soft eyes. If you do not have someone to talk to your pet cat is all ears. Another reason is that they are very loving, if you are down your cat is there to cheer you up. Your cat will rub on your legs and meow softly in your ear and lick your face until you feel happy again.

Also if you are looking for a pet that is not hard to look after, a cat is a pet for you. They do not cost much, only about 15 dollars or you can get them from the pound for free. They don't eat much or drink much so you do not have to spend all your money buying little friskies and all they drink is water.

Cats are pretty nice and they don't cost much. These are some reasons why a cat is a great pet to have.

Score Point 4

This response is organized and controlled, but the development is uneven. Some ideas (small, not hard to look after) are unelaborated, while others (loving, do not cost much) are elaborated with specific details (rub on your legs, get them from the pound for free).

A seagull would make a strange and great pet. The first and best reason is because when you're home in the busy, dirty and crowded city all tied up with school, chores and getting from one activity to the next, the call of your pet gull can remind you of the seaside. This one sound can carry you away from the busy city and take you to the calm, beautiful seaside. This can reduce stress.

You can train your gull to use the bathroom only in certain places.

Gulls aren't that pretty up close, but they look nice when they glide along in the air and gracefully flap their wings. Watching this could also reduce stress.

It might be a slight pain because you'll have to move near a lake or a pond since seagulls love fish. This would be good because maybe it could catch you some and you could brag to your friends. Or you could train it to eat birdfeed.

All in all, a gull would be worth the trouble.

Score Point 4

This higher level "4" response has a single focus (seagull) and is organized and controlled. Some of the ideas (remind you of the seaside, have to move) are developed with appropriate and varied detail (carry you away from the busy city, seagulls love fish). However, other ideas are bare (use the bathroom) or general (aren't that pretty, look nice). More even development would contribute to a higher score.

5 - The response indicates a generally strong command of exposition.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

Dear Editor,

I think the best pet anyone could have is a dog, because they are always loyal. They will stay by your side, even if you are about to die. Also, they will take a bullet for you. They will always be there for you.

You can do a lot of things with a dog. You can teach them tricks, like to sit, beg, roll over, and play dead. You can play with them and run around with them. You can do just about anything to them and they stay pretty mellow.

Some people say that dogs are smarter than cats. I think that is very true. Dogs don't usually run out into the street like cats do sometimes.

Dogs are useful, too. Some dogs are used as "eyes" for the blind. People from special organizations train the dogs to wear harnesses on their bodies to help guide the blind. Guard dogs warn you when you have an intruder.

So frankly, dogs are better animals, useful, and good friends to the end. That is why I like dogs.

Score Point 5

This response demonstrates a generally strong command of expository writing. It is organized, fluent, and evenly developed. Each key idea is elaborated with specific details (take a bullet for you, wear harnesses on their bodies). The effective conclusion provides a sense of unity and completeness. Smoother transitions and more development are needed for a higher score.

Dear Sir:

I saw your ad in the newspaper about what animal would be the best pet, and here's the letter I'm writing back to you.

I think that the best animal would be a snake. Some people think that snakes are slimey, gross and mean, but really they are very nice and sweet, and they are not slimey at all. At my house my family and I have seventeen snakes. They are all very sweet and kind.

When you feel snake they feel silkey, smooth and clean. They have scales like a fish that overlaps. They feel cold like icecubes. Their tail wraps around your finger so they do not fall.

The color of the snakes are so beatful and bright. Some colors of snakes are orang and black. Some are brown and black.

Snakes can grow up to seventy feet and some grow up to two feet long. Such as the python can grow up to seventy-five feet long.

Another reason I think that snakes are the best pets are they don't eat very much or go to the bathroom very much. The snakes only have to eat about every three weeks or so, and go to the bathroom about every three weeks. So that's why I think snakes are the best pet to have.

Score Point 5

This response is organized and controlled and an overall progression is apparent. Key ideas are elaborated with varied and specific detail (scales like a fish that overlap, eat about every three weeks). Despite a quick ending, the thorough and even elaboration of ideas provides a sense of completeness.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of exposition

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

The best pet to have is a goldfish. There are many reasons why. They don't cost much, they are easy to take care of, and goldfish are fun.

It doesn't take very much money to buy a goldfish. They cost less than one dollar each, but dogs can cost hundreds of dollars. Their food is cheap too, and one bottle lasts a very long time. They don't need shots like cats and dogs and all you need for them is a bowl, which is cheaper than an aquarium, which you need for tropical fish. Goldfish don't ruin the furniture, either.

Taking care of your goldfish is easy and doesn't take much time. All you have to do is remember when to feed them and when to clean out their bowl. Then you just sprinkle the food on top of water. When it is time to clean the fishbowl just put the fish in a glass of water while you rinse the bowl and put in fresh water. They don't need walking or petting. They don't shed, they don't have to go outside, or even get baths like dogs and cats do.

The best part about goldfish is that it is very fun to watch them swim around in their bowl because of all the things they do. They dive, jump and swim very fast. If you have more than one goldfish they chase each other all over. That is very fun

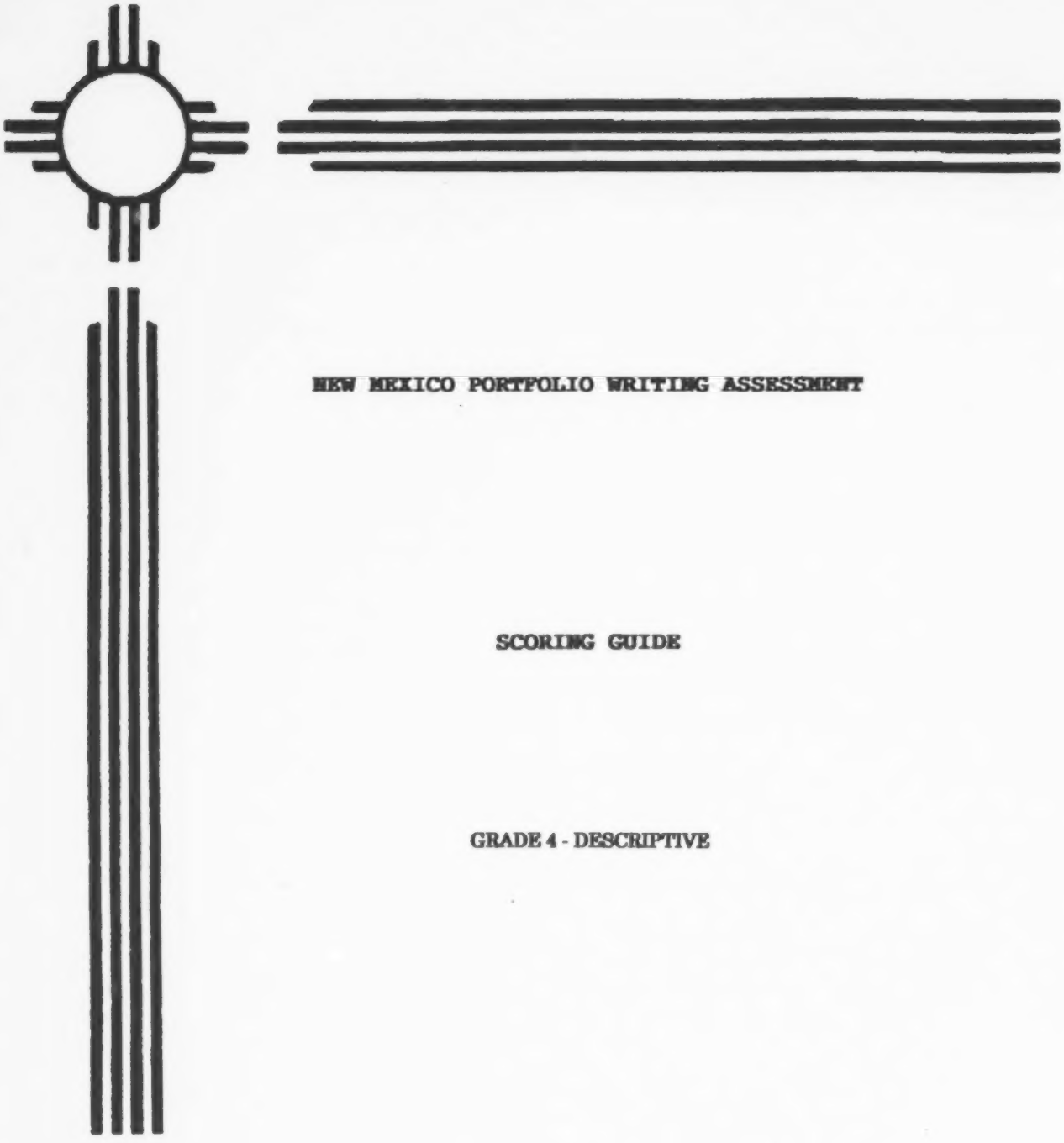
to see. Some goldfish are very pretty. They have long fins and different colors like red, blue and green (some are even black!) and they are graceful.

Goldfish are perfect pets. You can have just one or several if your bowl is big. They are easy to find because all pet stores have them. They are easy to care for all by yourself and they are very fun to watch.

Score Point 6

This response exhibits a strong command of expository writing. The writer has developed each of the three key ideas (cost, care, fun) with varied and specific details (cost less than one dollar, just sprinkle the food, they chase each other all over). Comparing the goldfish to cats and dogs is a successful compositional risk. In addition, the clear organizational strategy and effective opening and closing provide completeness and unity.

NOTES



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 4 - DESCRIPTIVE

NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT - DESCRIPTIVE SCORING RUBRIC

STRONG COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	GENERALLY STRONG COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	PARTIAL COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	LIMITED COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION	INADEQUATE COMMAND OF DESCRIPTION
SCORE POINT 6	**SCORE POINT 5**	**SCORE POINT 4**	**SCORE POINT 3**	**SCORE POINT 2**	**SCORE POINT 1**
Has an effective opening and closing that ties the piece together	Has an opening and a closing	Generally has an opening and closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing	May not have an opening and/or closing
Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and has a single focus	Relates to the topic and usually has a single focus; some responses may drift from the focus	Some responses relate to the topic but drift or abruptly shift focus	May state a subject or a list of subjects; may have an uncertain focus that must be inferred
Well-developed, complete response that is organized and progresses logically; writer takes compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses	Key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details; some risks may be taken and are mostly successful; may be flawed, but has sense of completeness and unity	Development may be uneven with elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details	Some responses are sparse with clear, specific details but little elaboration; others are longer but ramble and repeat ideas	Details are a mixture of general and specific with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like highlight response	Details are general, may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent
	Organized and progresses logically, but there may be a lapse	Some responses are organized with little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea; other responses may ramble somewhat with clusters of ideas that may be loosely connected, but an overall progression is apparent	Some responses have elaborated details but are interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by lack of transitions	Attempt at organization; some attempt to control details but few, if any, transitions	Some lengthier papers are disorganized and difficult to follow; may show no sense of planning
Very few, if any, errors in usage	Few errors in usage	Some errors in usage, no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in usage	May display numerous errors in usage	May have severe problems with usage including tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice
Variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes demonstrates syntactic and verbal sophistication; very few, if any, errors in sentence construction	Syntactic and verbal sophistication through a variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes	May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax; avoids excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain a few errors in sentence construction	May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may display errors in sentence construction	Excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes; may contain numerous errors in sentence construction	May contain an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences; may be incoherent or unintelligible
Very few, if any, errors in mechanics	Few errors in mechanics	May display some errors in mechanics but no consistent pattern	May display a pattern of errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere with readability	May display numerous serious errors in mechanics NOTE: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension	May display severe errors in mechanics. NOTE: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

This is the prompt 4th Grade students used when writing the following papers. It may be used for practice with your students.

> Think about your favorite place to eat. This might be at a restaurant, in your home, or at your school. Describe this place so someone reading your paper will know what it is like. You might want to include what it looks like, the sounds you hear there, the smells, and how you feel when you are there.

1 = The response indicates an inadequate command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Details are vague and/or general. They may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning.

- may have severe problems with usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, and word choice.

- may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect sentences. Some statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

- may display severe errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with comprehension.

One day I was with my mom in the house and my mom said, "get ready because we're going out to eat." Then we whent through the freeway and I saw Pizza Hut. I was ready because I saw that place. We went to my aunts house. Then we went back to the road.

Then we went to the road again The we saw Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and Wendye's. Then we went to Pizza Hut because everybody like pizza in my family. Then we went to Wendy's because my sister wanted a hamberger. Then we went to many places.

Then we were excited because we were going to pizza hut. We were surprised because we were going to eat there. We were surprized a lot because I had a pizza hut pas. It was so prety outside The place was so nice, the sign was white, Red, and black. The place was Red and white all over.

Score Point 1

This response shows an inadequate command of descriptive writing. This essay is presented in the narrative mode with a few general details which describe Pizza Hut (pretty outside, nice). The focus of the essay shifts from Pizza Hut to Wendy's, causing confusion for the reader. There is little sense of planning or strategy. In addition, the errors interfere with comprehension.

Yes! were going to Peter Piper Pizza. My family and I went to Peter Piper Pizza. We go there because it's our favorite thing. We always go at Las Cruces. My mom said when we were finished were going to come again. So we went on Saturday and it wasn't opened.

We had to go eat at Mcdonalds. So we went we ate and when we finished eating.

I wasn't through with my coke. And boom an accident happened the coke was all over me

There were some people in Mc donalds they were laughing and I got nervous. Then we went to the car and I was sobbing. And my mom said that we were coming on Friday to Mcdonalds. I said to my mom no lets just go to Peter Piper Pizza.

I like Peter Piper Pizza because it's my favorite thing to eat. I like Peter Piper Pizza very much because it has cheese on it.

The restaurant smells like cheese. I like cheese and in Peter Piper Pizza because theres a lot of games. And in Mcdonalds it's smells onions and I don't like onions. It doesn't have games.

Score Point 1

This response shows an inadequate command of descriptive writing. The details are inappropriate and random (had to go to McDonald's, the coke accident) and do not add to the description. The focus shifts between the two subjects (Peter Piper Pizza and McDonald's), resulting in confusion for the reader. The paper is disorganized, difficult to follow, and shows little sense of planning.

Yes, Were going to Peter Piper Pizza. With my family so I could party party. Were going to Las Cruces, N.M. Peter Piper Pizza.

Peter Piper Pizza my favorite restaurant because it has games like Terminator two and Hergy Ball and pizza !!

Im going with family like cousins, tia's, tio's, and everyone.

You ask why Im going? For a birthday party! And because I want to ok so next time show up theres sales it's like heaven eh and because it has cofortable benches that are tan color yeah Im so exited I just can't hide it

Oh but the ride seems so long only fifteen minutes but it seems like two, three, four hours no a day

"Get the presents."

"OK mom."

Yep! my favorite place to eat is Peter Piper Pizza.

Score Point 1

Overall, this response shows an inadequate command of descriptive writing. The paper drifts in and out of the narrative mode and only a few descriptive details (games like Terminator and Hergy Ball, comfortable benches) are presented. In addition, sentence formation and punctuation errors interfere with comprehension.

2 = The response indicates a limited command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. There is a mixture of general and specific details. They are presented with little, if any, elaboration, producing a list-like response--highlight papers. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions making it difficult to move from idea to idea.

- may display numerous errors in usage.

- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

- may display numerous serious errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere somewhat with comprehension.

GULDEN CORRAL

THE GOLDEN CORRAL IS KIND OF LIKE A NORMAL HOUSE JUST WITH A FLAT ROOF IT IS ALSO WIDER. WHEN I WALK IN THERE IT SMELLS LIKE PREFUME. SOMETIMES WHEN I WALK IN THE GOLDEN CORRAL I ALSO HEAR LOTS OF PEOPLE AT THE SALAD BAR. I ALSO HEAR THE GRUMBLING OF THE DESERT BAR TOO. WE GO TO THE GOLDEN CORRAL WHEN EVER-BODY IN THE FAMILY IS HUNGRY BECAUSE THAY GIVE US LOTS OF GOOD FOOD.

Score Point 2

This response includes a mix of general details (I hear alot of people, the grumbling of the desert bar) with some specifics (flat roof, it smells like perfume). There is an attempt at organization, moving from the outside to the inside of the restaurant, but some elaboration of the features and more specific details are necessary for a higher score.

My Favorite Place to Eat

My favorite place to eat is Golden Corral. Golden Corral is my favorite place to eat because they have good service, good quality, and "WONDERFUL" food. Also every kind of dealicous food I like is right there. It looks like an ice cream, saled ba, and coke heaven with comfortable seats. There's always birthday songs, talking, and the sounds of cooking. Everytime I go there I can smell the saled, and the ice cream bar. I fell so happy, and lucky everytime I go there, and if you wan't my opinion, "Go there right now."

Score Point 2

This response shows a limited command of descriptive writing. The details are either general (good service, wonderful food) or list-like. More specific details would be needed for a higher score.

Grandma's Resturant

My favorite place to eat is my grandma's house. She lives on a farm. When we walf in, my grandma hugs me. I smell her peach cobler. My mom brings in her jello. My aunt brings in her sweet potatoes. My other aunt brings in her green beans. My grandma is making chicken and graywee with rice. I hear my cousins playing Nintendo. I go and join them. We play intill the food is ready. There is chicken and graywee, sweet potatoes, green beans, rice, and jello. We eat the delicous food and then we go and play in the cornfields and climb in the tractors. Then we come in and eat peach cobler. We have to stay inside so my grandma can hide easter eggs. We watch my cousin play till he gets to the princess on Nintendo. Then we go hunt easter eggs. This year I found the bonus it was a golf ball. Then we go home and eat some of our eggs. I love going to the worlds best resturant. My grandma's house.

Score Point 2

This response begins with a list of specific details (I hear nintendo, there is chicken and gravy), but the writer loses focus and drifts into a narrative. This shift in focus and the need for more descriptive elaboration combine to show a limited command of descriptive writing.

3 = The response indicates a partial command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- may not have an opening and/or a closing. The responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus. Some "3" papers are sparse--they have several clear, specific details with a little elaboration, and they are organized and controlled. Occasionally, a paper will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas or adding an idea for no clear reason, resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse. Other "3" papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.
- may display a pattern of errors in usage.
- may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.
- may display a pattern of errors in mechanics.

Note: Errors may interfere with readability.

Comida de Mehicanos

My favorite restaurant is named Comida de Mehicanos. The size of it was a two story restaurant. The rug had squars on it. The colors were red, green, white and blue. It was beautiful. The furniture was all covered in shiny wood.

I smelled flautas, gorditas and enchilladas cooking on the fire. That made me hungry. Ther food tasted good and dlicious.

I heard a lot of Mexican songs including mardiachis and people talking.

When I left I felt like I wanted to come back again tomarrow.

Score Point 3

This response has some specific detail with elaboration (the rug had squares; colors were red, green, white; heard Mexican songs, including mariachis). The piece follows a rudimentary organizational structure and needs additional elaborated detail to demonstrate more than a partial command of descriptive writing.

Juanito's

My favorite place to eat is Juanito's, a mexican food restaurant on Mayberry Drive. The food there is sensational. I always order the same thing when I go there, two bean burritos with no chese and a Dr. Pepper. I think Juanito's has the best food in town.

Juanito's is decorated very nice. Some of my favorite decorations are the Mexican dolls, sombreros, and blankets. Juanitos is a very entertaining restaurant You can hear pots and pans banging in the kitchen, and you can also hear Mexican music. When you sit down and have ordered it's very hard to wait for your food because it smells so good. When I go there I'm so excited I can't wait to eat. These are some of the reasons I like to eat at Juanitos.

Score Point 3

This response, which shows a partial command of descriptive writing, has some clear, specific details with a little elaboration (Mexican dolls, sombreros and blankets, hear pots and pans banging in the kitchen). The organization of the piece is weak, however, with abrupt shifts between ideas. The response needs more elaboration of details and a better organizational plan to achieve a higher score.

The Best Place to Eat

The best restaurant in New Mexico is Guadalajara, it is a mexican restaurant. When you walk in you hear mexican music in the background. I can smell their enchiladas. When you walk in you see a fish tank. Then the waitress will seat you, she's nice. Then she will give us our menu's and give us some chips, and hot salsa. I can smell the food it smells delicious.

The waitress comes back and takes our order. Then while our food is cooking my parent's talk. When I'm waiting for my food I feel great because the food is so good. Then I listen and hear plates being put on the table too put food in. Then our food comes about eight minutes later. You can get about any kind of mexican food you want. They have a Wishish Well to throw change in. In the fish tank they have a electric eel. They have candy you can by. When you go to their bathroom it is clean. They don't chaige a bunch of money. And while your in town go to Guadalajara.

Score Point 3

This response, which shows a partial command of descriptive writing, has some clear, specific details (Mexican music, smell the enchiladas, fish tank). Some details (The waitress comes back and takes our order, our food comes about eight minutes later) are general and could be used to describe any restaurant. Although more specific details are added at the end, a more consistently maintained organizational strategy is necessary for a higher score.

4 = The response indicates a command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare unelaborated details.

- may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.

- may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be few errors in sentence construction.

- may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern.

Casa Bonita

Casa Bonita is a dark, calm place to eat. It is my favorite place to eat because the waiters are nice, the food is good, I like the scenery, and it dosn't cost much! The only problem is there is usually a big line.

When you go in you hear Mexican music playing. The waiters are dressed up in Spanish closthes to look like Mexicans.

Casa Bonita means "pretty house" in Spanish. From the outside it looks like a pink castle. Inside there are many rooms. My favorite is the Cave. It looks like a real cave with a waterfall that comes from the roof into a Pool.

My favorite thing to eat there is tacos. On the table there is a little flag. When you raise it a waiter will come, and you can get free refills, order something else, or get all the sopapillas you want.

Every time I go I can hear people talking, knifes clanking in the kitchen, water rushing from the waterfall, and music playing. I can smell enchiladas cooking.

After you eat there's a game room, with many games to play. Then you leave and that is my favorite place to eat.

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of descriptive writing. There are specific details (it looks like a real cave with a waterfall, looks like a pink castle) which are interspersed with unelaborated and general ideas (a game room with many games). More even development and smoother transitions between ideas are needed for a higher score.

My Favorite Place to Eat

My favorite place to eat is Denny's.

At breakfast time I smell things like pancakes, waffles, toast, and omelets. Sometimes I can even smell coffee. At lunch time I can smell hamburger paties, hot dogs, ham in sandwiches, and french fries. At dinner time I smell steak, corn, rice, fried shrimp, plainly cooked shrimp, peas, pie, salad, and alot of other things. The smells make me so hungry.

I can hear thing like people talking, drink being poured in cups, music in the background, and hamburger paties sizzling on a grill.

The menus make the food look so good I can almost taste them. The menus almost make it harder to decide.

When I go to Denny's I feel impatient waiting for the food, even if it doesn't take a long time. When I get to eat I feel happy even warm inside.

The Denny's in Alamogordo looks nice enough to live in. There is a counter that surounds the front of the kitchen. The kitchen is to the right of the entrance and in the opposite wall. Next to the kitchen is a

hall that runs straight ahead. In front of the kitchen is another hall running horizontly.

My favorite thing to eat there is the fried shrimp dinner with corn and rice.

Well, that's Denny's, and I recommend you go there and try it out.

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of descriptive writing. There are clear, specific details (hamburger patties sizzling on the grill, a counter that surrounds the front of the kitchen), but the development is uneven. Elaborated details are interspersed with general ideas (the menu makes the food look good, I feel warm inside). More effective elaboration and stronger transitions between ideas are needed for a higher score.

The Italian Pasta Kitchen

Hi my name is Patricia, and my favorite place to eat is the Pasta Kitchen. I like going to the Pasta Kitchen because, I like the food, and the warm atmosphere. When I walk in, I smell the delicious garlic bread and the spaghetti sauce. After we are seated, you can hear the lovely Italin music, that's when my step mom starts talking, and it's very entertaining. Then a very nice young lady comes to see what you wolud like to drink and ofcourse you tell her what you would like. Next thing you know she's off. While your waiting, you see people laghing, talking, and eating, and my family and I entertain our selves by talking to eachother. Then comes the waitress with your drinks, and ready to take your order. When she gets to me I always order my favorite thing . . . which is Manicotti.

After everybody has order she puts down the garlic bread sticks, and she's off again to get your food. For some reason right when we get done with our bread sticks she bring out our food right on time. We take at least two hours to eat our main course. When we get done with our dinner we always save room for

dessert. I like getting the chocolate layered cake, even though there is 400 calories in a bite, it is still good. Finally we get done eating, and were all stuffed. My father pays us out, and they say "thank you for coming, please come again.") When we all waddle out the door, we get in the car and my sister and I say "lets go back again," and we always do.

Score Point 4

This response exhibits a command of descriptive writing. The writer's strategy of describing a typical night at the restaurant, rather than the more visual aspects, provides effective organizational control. The response includes some specific details (I smell garlic bread; I hear lovely Italian music), but more specific elaboration is required for a higher score.

5 = The response indicates a generally strong command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically; however, there may be a lapse. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- have few errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have few errors in mechanics.

Black Angus

Have you ever been to Black Angus? Well if you haven't I'm going to tell you how great it is there. Alot of people like it because it's so big and so clean. Other people like it because it is so cheap. Well I like it for many other reasons. One of them is the gorgeous dim light's that make you feel like your sitting at home. And the smell of the meat cooking makes you want to faint. The service is great too. The waiters and waitresses sit there and talk to you! They also have great music, like Country, Rap, Classical, and Heavy Metal. One of the best parts is the big screen T.V. You can watch whatever show you want to watch. And my favorite part is the T-bone steak, mushrooms and shrimp. I hope you come there. It's a good place to be and it's not very expensive at all.

Score Point 5

This response exhibits a generally strong command of descriptive writing. The focus is consistent and the ideas progress logically. Each detail is developed with additional information (have great music, like country, Rap). The writer has used effective transitions to add to the fluency of the response. More development is necessary for a higher score.

The Golden Corral

My favorite eating place is The Golden Corral. It is very beautiful. It is made out of Indian red bricks. When you walk in you are standing on brown carpet. Above you are are lots of big ceiling fans. On the wall are small dim lights.

As they shole you to your table on the right hand side is a big saled bar with two sides On the right side there are Macorrni, Sunflowerseeds, pinapples, Pepperonies, peaches, and chicken. On the left side of it are tacos, pizza, crackers, peaches, pears, pinapples, maccorni, Sunflower seeds, strawberries, pepperonis, and tomatoes. When you get to your table they have soft velviot padding and the tables are wooden, with white table cloths on them.

The sounds you get to hear are pots and pans hiting against each other. People are talking to each other and soft low music plays. But all the noise isn't really that loud.

When you walk by the bakery you can smell fresh baked rolls, blue berry muffins and Chocholot chip cookies And all that food is great! That's why I like to eat there.

Score Point 5

This response exhibits a generally strong command of descriptive writing. The focus is consistent and the writer's strategy of taking the reader on a visual tour of the restaurant provides an effective organization. The writer provides specific descriptive details (Indian red bricks, soft velvet padding), and the key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. More vivid word choice and better transitions are needed for a higher score.

6 = The response indicates a strong command of description.

Writing samples in this category:

- have an effective opening and a closing that ties the piece together. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid responses.
- have very few, if any, errors in usage.
- demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

My family and I always enjoy to go out to eat. We go to eat many places such as Hardees, Mcdonalds, Applebee's, Chick Fil A, Ryan's, Quincy's, etc. But out of all of them I love to go to Darryl's. It has the best food in Montgomery.

When we arrive at Darryl's and get seated, I know exactly what I want, the one and only, Cajun Fried Cat fish. It is the best catfish i've ever tasted. They give it a good name Cajun, because it is real hot.

After we all get through eating the deliciuos dinner, we tip the waiter and go to pay. Right after we leave table, the waiter cleans off the table, takes our plates, and also our glasses to keep Darryl's nice and clean, which it is.

Darryl's is a really neat place. It has an upstairs and a downstairs. Downstairs it has lots of tables and a bar where you can drink beer, wine, watch the big screen t.v., etc. Upstairs it has tables inside a jail, its really neat. My family always likes to sit there. Also upstairs there is a table sticking out from the side. You are very high up and it is scary. But I always love to sit there which we rarely do.

As you step right into Darryl's you look around and see alot of old antiques such as old horns, old license plates, old guns, etc. The reason you see all these is because it is very old. On

the sign it says Darryl's Resturant, Since 1885. That S very old.

So as you can see Darryl's is an old, beutiful, delicious place to eat. So I hope everyone will get a chance to go there. I hope I do again. We do go to Darryl's alot but the prices are high. It usually costs my family twenty Five dollars just to eat. But it is all worth it because the food is great. My family always loves to go there. I hope you do to.

Score Point 6

The writer of this detailed response exhibits a strong command of descriptive writing. The response is well-developed and organized. It progresses logically from beginning to end. The effective opening which emphasizes the writer's love of Darryl's is reemphasized at the end and gives the response a sense of unity and completeness.

This kitchen is in an old farmhouse out in the country. It is decorated with blue wallpaper with pictures of geese on it. Hanging from the oven door are matching towels that are pale blue with a white goose on it, with a dark blue ribbon around it's neck. There a pure white counters with a few scratches on them. There is a white sink with gold faucets on it. There are cherry cabinets that are all around in the kitchen so there is plenty of space to keep and store food. There are gold knobs on the cabinets to match the sink. The kitchen is always kept sparkling clean.

When you walk into the kitchen the smell of bread baking and a hearty meal being cooked fills the air. There is always a great smell in the kitchen. The children always compliment their mother on how good the food always smells. The kitchen smells of the foods you would expect to smell in a country home. The family always eats a homemade dinner. They grow most of their food so the kitchen also smells of fresh fruits and vegetables. There is always a great smell in this kitchen.

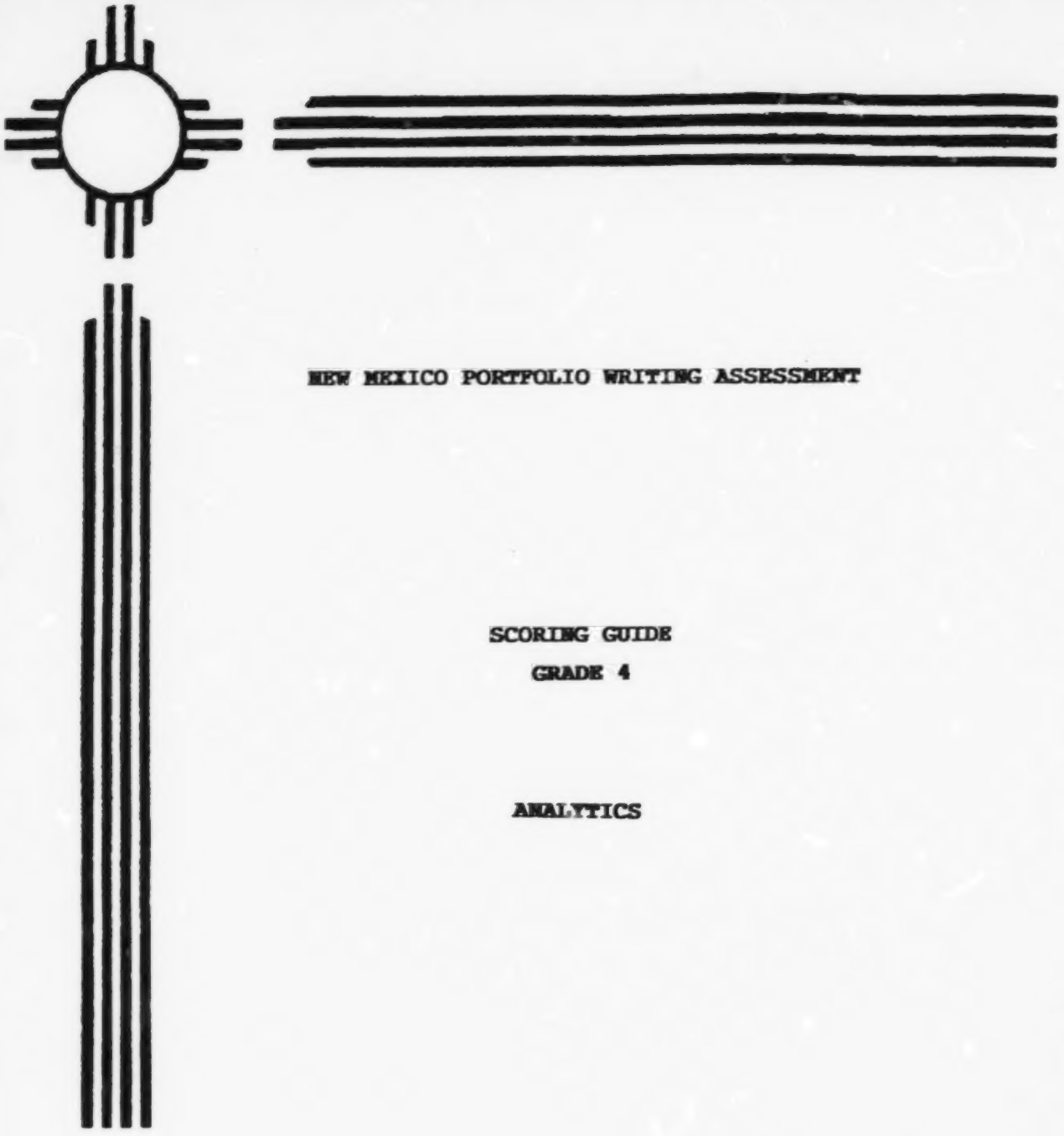
In this kitchen you can always hear the sound of children playing in the next room. There is also the sound of timers ticking or bupping so the mother knows to take something out of the oven or to stir something. When she calls her family into the dining room you can hear cheers of joy and happiness.

When you walk into this kitchen in the middle of winter you feel warmth from the oven. In this kitchen you always feel relaxed. If you are a stranger and you come into the kitchen you feel like you are part of the family. This kitchen always makes you happy when you hear the happy children playing. In this kitchen there is never any sadness but always happiness.

Score Point 6

This is a thoroughly detailed response that is organized around a sensory tour of the kitchen. The elaboration is well-developed and specific with some vivid moments (the sound of timers ticking or buzzing). The thoroughness of the elaboration and the specificity of the word choice help this paper to achieve a "6."

NOTES



NEW MEXICO PORTFOLIO WRITING ASSESSMENT

SCORING GUIDE

GRADE 4

ANALYTICS

ANALYTIC SCORING GUIDELINES

SENTENCE FORMATION

3. All sentences are complete and often varied in length and structure. The paper reads smoothly from sentence to sentence. There are few run-ons or fragments.

2. There is basically good sentence structure with occasional awkward or confusing constructions. There may be several run-ons or fragments.

1. There are many problems with sentence structure. Simple sentence patterns are used. Sentences are short, somewhat childlike and repetitious. Run-ons and fragments are common.

MECHANICS

3. Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for grade level. There are few or no spelling errors in words appropriate to grade level.

2. Use of punctuation and capitalization is adequate but will contain certain errors. Several spelling mistakes may be present, or the same mistake may be repeated.

1. Capitalization is erratic and basic punctuation is omitted or haphazard. There are too many errors in mechanics which interfere with communication.

WORD USAGE

3. Vocabulary is carefully and imaginatively used. There are few or no problems with subject-verb agreement, correct forms of verbs, selection of pronouns, possessives, etc.

2. Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness. Some difficulties with agreement, verbs, pronouns, possessives, etc., may be manifest.

1. Vocabulary is quite limited; the essay evidences too many errors in agreement, verb forms, pronoun choice, possessives, etc., which interfere with communication.

DEVELOPMENT

3. Response is clearly elaborated, well organized, detailed enough to enhance clarity, follows from a main idea to a logical conclusion.

2. Details are clear and specific, but they may be unevenly elaborated or poorly organized.

1. Few details are included in a very brief response. If present, details are vague and sketchy.

Pretend that you see a shiny, purple stone on your way to school. As you pick it up, it begins to change into many different colors. Write a story about what happens next.

The Puprle Futuer Rock

When I was waking to school I saw a shiny puprle rock I pickit it up it strted to chang colers it put me in a bubbly the sine rock made the bubbly chang colers and all my frands found a shine rock to and they where in a bubbly to. All the bubbly popet and we went in to the futuer all my frends where in the futuer all of my fiends shiny rock where diffrent colers. A hole dunch of peple came after us and we hilld them. And more poeple came after us but they can't cach us they got tierd and we hilld them. And more poeple came but thers helped us. So go bake home and the presedent gave us a reword for saving him.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 1
There are many sentence formation errors--run-ons and fragments. The correct sentences are all very simplistic in structure.

MECHANICS: 1
The many capitalization errors in this response, some of which interfere with communication, keep this paper a "1" in mechanics.

WORD USAGE: 1
Agreement errors are not that severe. However, vocabulary is limited, repetitive, and vague. The response needs more specific word choice for a higher score.

DEVELOPMENT: 1
Repetition of ideas in a response this brief keeps this paper a "1" in development.

One Day I was walking to School when I found A Purple Shiny stone. It was verey Hot!. So I picked It up and put it in my Bakepack and when i got to School I open my Bakepack for my homework it Just Burst into A tini man in a tini Spaceship then he just Shot out of classroom. And I never say him agen. Intil one Night I say A little purple stone fly across the Black an Blue SKy.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 1
There are many sentence formation errors--run-ons and fragments. The correct sentences are all very simplistic in structure.

MECHANICS: 1
The many capitalization errors in this response keep this paper a "1" in mechanics. Several spelling errors are present (verey, bakepack, tinis, agen, Intil).

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but not carefully or imaginatively used.

DEVELOPMENT: 2
Details are clear and specific, but more elaboration is needed for a higher score.

On my way to school I found a shiny purple stone. I picked it up and it started to change many different colors, then it felt like one pound heavy.

The next thing I knew I was in a forest all by myself. I heard some nosie. So I looked though a bush and saw a street that go's to my school. Then I followed the street to school. When I was at school I droped the purple stone and went into school.

When school was over I picked up the purple stone. This time I was in a jungle. Ten lions were surounding me about to atack. A man swung out of the trees and pulled me in the air. I was safe from the lions, but I still didn't know who the man was. The I droped the purple stone, I was in the school yard again. I never saw the purple stone again.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 2
There is basically good sentence structure with occasional awkward constructions.

MECHANICS: 2
Use of punctuation and capitalization is adequate for the fourth grade. Several spelling errors are present, but the response is still eligible for a "2" in mechanics.

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but not carefully or imaginatively used.

DEVELOPMENT: 1
Details in this response are sketchy and more elaboration is needed for a higher score.

THE Stone

I was on my way to schoce when I saw a purple stone. I picked it up. It was very smooth. All of a suden the stone Started changing colors. It got me mad so I through it on the ground and started walking again but I relized I liked the stone. so I went back and got it and went to schcol. When I got to schcol I shocd the class the stone. They liked it very much. When I got home from schcol I shocd My Mom the stone she liked it so sha put it in her garden when the stone saw all the plants it began to change colors again and it hasn't stoped since.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 2
The variety in sentence structure compensates for the run-on sentences in this response.

MECHANICS: 2
Use of punctuation and capitalization is adequate for the fourth grade. Several spelling errors are present, but the response is enough to achieve a "2" in mechanics.

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but not carefully or imaginatively used.

DEVELOPMENT: 2
Details are clear and specific, but more elaboration is needed for a higher score.

The Purple Stone

One day as I was walking to school, I saw a beautiful glassy, purple stone. When I picked it up it changed into different mellow colors. I needed to find out where it came from, but I could not find someone who new.

After school I showed it to my mom, dad, and my baby brother. They all liked it but we had to take it to a jewelry store. They told us the stone was real, but they did not know where it came from. So we kept it. I got to keep it in my room since I found it.

The next day the stone had gotten bigger, and hot. I went to show it to my mom, and dad. They said that the stone is very special so I didn't worry about it growing anymore.

I went down the street to play with my friend, when a man came up to me asking if I had seen a purple stone. I said, "yes, I have it." The man asked me if

he could have it because it was his. God gave it to him, and he gave me a five dollar bill!

I showed the five dollar bill to my mom, and dad. The were very happy for me.

SENTENCE FORMATION: 3
Sentences are complete and varied in length and structure, and the response reads fluently from sentence to sentence.

MECHANICS: 3
Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for the fourth grade level. There is only one spelling error (someone who new).

WORD USAGE: 2
Vocabulary is acceptable in scope and appropriateness but not imaginatively used.

DEVELOPMENT: 2
Details are clear and specific, but more elaboration is needed for a higher score.

The Wish Stone

One day I was walking back from school. And at the edge of the corner, was a purple stone. So I went up to it and looked at it weird. It looked like a big shiny flower. I looked at it again, and again. Then took one step, and all of a sudden it started to flash all different colors! So I wanted to make it stop, so I touched it and

BOOOOM! It shot up into the sky! And then it came right back down. I thought that it was very neat. So I picked it up and tied a piece of string to it. Then I put it around my neck. I ran home to spread the news. I told my mom but she didn't belive me. So I went into my room. I felt sad. But what if it was only my amagination? Then I said, "Oh I wish my mom would belive me!" My words echoed in my room. Again and again soom my words went into my stone. And right away came my mother. She said, "I belive you!" "I really, really do!"

"Wow"! I shouted. I couldn't believe it. It makes wishes come true! Soon it was night and I went to sleep. In the morning I woke up. And woe my stone was gone! I searched everywhere. Soon I looked under the pillow. There was a letter it said.

"Dear person,"
"I am sorry I couldn't give you another wish."
"I had to go back to my planet"
"They need me!"

Your friend,
Stone Star.

I said thats alright but next time I want it to be....

Money!

SENTENCE FORMATION: 3
Sentences are complete and varied in length and structure, and the response reads fluently from sentence to sentence.
MECHANICS: 3
Punctuation and capitalization are consistently appropriate for the 4th grade level. The few spelling errors that exist are okay for this lengthy response.
WORD USAGE: 3
Vocabulary is carefully and imaginatively used (flash, imagination, echoed). Also there are no errors in agreement or verb tense.
DEVELOPMENT: 3
This response is organized, elaborated, and detailed to the "3" level. The main idea follows logically from beginning to end.

NOTES

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